

## Intelligence Report

DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force

28 April 1995

### Croatia: Security Situation for Sanctions Monitors

*Monitors in Croatia probably would face greater risk than those elsewhere in the former Yugoslav republics because of the near-term threat of war in Croatia, the likely stationing of monitors in key areas of current tension, and the Krajina Serbs opposition to the new UN mandate. The risk would be mitigated if the Krajina Serb leadership approved placement of the customs monitors. Zagreb's decision to allow a diminished UN troop presence to remain in Croatia under a new mandate has reduced the immediate chances of widespread conflict in the Krajina. It is unlikely, however, that the Croatians and Krajina Serbs will agree on implementing the new mandate's terms, increasing the prospects for war by mid-summer. Even with a new UN mandate in place, the fundamental interests of Croatia and the Krajina Serbs almost certainly cannot be reconciled through negotiations, making a renewed conflict almost certain. Fighting in Croatia would be the most fierce and widespread since 1991, and could result in large-scale "Yugoslav" Army involvement. Croatian military plans include isolating the Krajina Serb "capital" of Knin, and retaking the Zagreb-Belgrade highway in Sector West where many SAMs are likely to be located.*

#### Serbian-Croatian Border Calm for now

The Serbian-Croatian border is relatively calm, but the "Yugoslav" Army continues to send weapons to Krajina Serb forces in Sector East. *If UN forces try to deploy to border checkpoints under the terms of the new UN mandate without approval by the Krajina Serbs, the Serbs would view the UN as beginning to take Croatia's side--a judgment that would impact on the role of the sanction monitors.*

- Ten T-55 tanks and six M-59 155mm guns had arrived in the Vukovar area by late March. *The equipment almost certainly came from "Yugoslav" Army stocks, because it had not previously been identified in the Krajina Serbs' inventory in Sector East.*

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- Bosnian-Serb "Vice President" Koljevic recently warned that any UN monitors put on Croatia's borders with Serb-held territories would be thrown out [redacted]
- Croatia will not attack Krajina Serb positions in Sector East, in hopes of keeping Belgrade out of any conflict. [redacted]

### Sanctions Monitors Most At Risk in Sector West

One of Croatia's key military goals is to retake the Zagreb-Belgrade highway, [redacted] Croatia would soon launch an attack to retake the highway if the Krajina Serbs try to close it, [redacted] ***A Croatian attack in Sector West almost certainly would begin from both ends of the highway and would include an airborne assault on the Sava River bridge at Bosanska Gradiska, leaving sanctions monitors with little warning.***

- ***Croatian troops probably can retake and hold most of Sector West because of overwhelming strength and relatively flat terrain.***
- The Croatian Army gave UN troops some three-hours warning before they launched the 1993 Maslenica attack in an effort to minimize UN casualties and ***probably would try to give a similar warning to sanctions monitors.***

### Zagreb Tightening the Screws

Croatian troops currently are maintaining military pressure on the Krajina Serbs and creating conditions for strategic surprise along all the confrontation lines, according to various sources.

- [redacted] partial mobilization has allowed the HV to bolster its presence along the entire confrontation line. [redacted] [redacted] Croatian Army exercises also increasingly have been held near front-line areas. ***If some UN troops leave under a new mandate, increased skirmishing is likely, and could quickly escalate.*** [redacted]

This report was prepared [redacted] in support of initiatives by the Office of the Vice President. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to Chief, DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force [redacted]

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### Key Safety Considerations

*The role of international sanctions assistance mission (SAM) personnel in advising local officials on sanctions enforcement and their daily exposure to sanctions violators creates a potentially hostile environment and the possibility of physical attack. Because of the near-term threat of war in Croatia, the likely stationing of monitors in key areas of tension, and the Krajina Serbs' opposition to the new UN mandate, which would attempt to impede their military trade with Serbia and the Bosnian Serbs, monitors in Croatia would face greater risk than monitors elsewhere. This risk would be mitigated somewhat if the placement of the monitors was approved in advance by the Krajina Serb leadership.*

-  Krajina Serb leaders blamed SAM monitors for the restrictions at Lipovac and threatened more drastic action than closing the highway in UNPA Sector West for one day. *The Krajina Serbs are likely to resort to threats, vandalism, and other forms of intimidation, but we cannot rule out the possibility of more hostile actions if the Krajina Serbs continue to blame SAMs for impeding their efforts to gain fuel and other supplies.*
- As long as the monitors are in Croatia-controlled territory, Zagreb is likely to try to lookout for their safety. *Collocation with UN personnel also enhances monitors' security, unless the Krajina Serbs begin harassing UN forces to show their dislike for the new mandate.*
- The SAM team in Croatia has had little presence along the Dalmatian coast and there have been no reported security threat to SAM team monitors periodically visiting this area in the last two years. If significant fighting resumes in Croatia, however, the Krajina Serbs are likely to attack these ports, endangering the SAMs.

*Placing the SAMs along Croatia's borders with Bosnia and Serbia would significantly increase the risk of an incident. The presence of UNCRO with the monitors could offset some of the increased risk. SAMs placed at the point where diversions to the Bosnian Serbs occur within Sector West--such as at the Bosanska Gradiska bridge separating Bosnia and the Krajina--would face increased risk.*